

Please substitute the following claims for the corresponding previously pending claims of the same numbers:

1. A method of screening for an agent that modulates bone mineralization, said method comprising:

contacting a cell containing a NELL-1 gene with a test agent; and

detecting an expression level of said NELL-1 gene in the contacted cell, where a difference in the expression level of NELL-1 in the contacted cell compared to an expression level of NELL-1 in a cell that is not contacted indicates that said test agent is an agent that modulates bone mineralization.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising recording agents that modulate expression of the NELL-1 nucleic acid or NELL-1 protein in a database of modulators of NELL-1 activity or in a database of modulators of bone mineralization.

In accordance with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, a marked up version showing the changes made to the claims is attached herewith as Appendix A. For the Examiner's convenience, a complete set of the currently pending claims is also submitted herewith as Appendix B.

These amendments are made without prejudice and are not to be construed as abandonment of the previously claimed subject matter or agreement with any objection or rejection of record.

REMARKS

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION.

The amendments to the specification merely correct informalities, e.g., request formal entry of a sequence listing, request formal entry of formal drawings, insert a reference to SEQ ID NO: 2 into the text (page 5) and correct a typographical error (page 11). These amendments introduce no new matter and entry is respectfully requested.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS.

Claims 1, 2, and 8-12 are pending with entry of this amendment, claims 3-7 and 13-49 being cancelled and no claims being added herein. Claims 1 and 2 are amended herein. These amendments introduce no new matter and support is replete throughout the specification. Accordingly, entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.